

TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY

BULLETIN

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CONTENTS

Folk Remedies from South Georgia	1
✓ <u>In Memoriam</u> : George Pullen Jackson	4
Text-Controlled Tune Variations in "The Boston Burglar"	5
Back Issues of T.F.S. <u>Bulletin</u> Wanted	10
Erratum in December, 1953, <u>Bulletin</u>	10
Dialect Collectors Need the Help of Folklorists	11
Military and Civil Titles in the Old Southwestern Yarns	13
News and Reviews	20

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FOLK REMEDIES FROM SOUTH GEORGIA

by

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Many folk remedies are still in current practice among the Geechee Negroes of the South Georgia coastal area. During the year and a half that I held a Guggenheim Fellowship for writing and research in Southern folk materials, I spent two months in the coastal region of Georgia. Much of the two months was used for collecting folklore of the Geechees.

I attended the meetings of Negro granny midwives (Geechees among their number) and their supervising nurses. Sometimes I went to their fish fries and mullet suppers. Many a day I spent fishing out on the bays with a large old Geechee granny in one end of the boat, her "grand boy" in the middle to row, and me in the other end of the boat with several watermelons. Now and then we put in to shore on one of the islands and ate another watermelon, replacing it with something of equal weight to keep the boat in balance. The granny fished and talked the very things I wanted to hear, rich in Geechee lore. Other times I went with Geechee women into the slash pine forest to pick "dog tongue," a plant used to adulterate fine tobacco. On Sunday I went to their "praise houses."

Thus notes on folk remedies and health measures accumulated. Some of the Geechee remedies I heard about pertained to practices in maternal and child care. Since at least a part of these were used in my book on the colored granny midwife, the book called Folks Do Get Born, I shall omit such "grannying" health measures from this paper's consideration.

There were various arguments to defend the old folk remedies and their use. "No sense paying out good money when you can cure yourself," was Aunt Sarah Baker's view on the matter.

"Them hosspillers scares me," declared Aunt Lily Bell Storms. She was a very primitive Geechee, totally illiterate and given to dabbling in voodoo practices, it was whispered about. She had consistently been refused by the Georgia Public Health Department a license to practice midwifery. Her maternal and other health remedies were so primitive and so very unattractive that in most instances all except those people under her direct control refused to submit to them.

Among the most primitive of her prescriptions were those which made use of various kinds of manure. The following are a few examples:

Sore throat - tea of dry dog manure
 A cold - rabbit pill tea
 Thrash - rub inside of mouth with the white part of chicken manure
 Spasms - warm cow dung on stomach as a poultice
 To break out measles - tea of sheep tatlings and corn shucks

Milk also figured in Aunt Lily Bell's practice, in most cases applied externally, even in rickets, her remedy for which was to wash the patient's legs with cow's milk. Others of her prescriptions for the medicinal use of milk were these:

Mare's milk rubbed on the chest for croup
 Garlic in milk for worms
 Mother's milk for sore eyes, milked into the eyes
 Dried birdeye vine powdered in milk for a cold
 Milk of the fig tree rubbed on for rheumatism

One day when I went fishing with Aunt Lily Bell, I was introduced to the use of certain animal creatures and insects as cures. A "grand boy" of Aunt Lily Bell's who had a severe case of whooping cough was made to cough in the face of a live catfish to cure his disease. For good measure he was made to swallow the fish's bladder inflated so he would learn to swim. In the course of other fishing trips came acquaintance with other prescriptions of Aunt Lily Bell, of which samples are offered here:

Fried mouse for bed wetting
 Dirt dauber's nest in vinegar for sprains
 Cock roach juice and red pepper in lard on cotton for earache
 A bullfrog squeezed to death in the hand for chills
 Dried lining of chicken gizzard chewed for nausea, indigestion,
 or colic
 Snail crawling across the toes to take away corns
 Necklaces of hog, alligator, or dog teeth worn to help a baby
 teething

Some remedies not exactly biological:

Wasp's nest in breast pocket to cure hard heart
 To win a woman a man should give her candy with a few drops of his
 blood on it.

Dog remedies:

For stammering, eat from same dish with a dog
 To cure fits, sleep with a dog
 For hiccoughs, kiss a dog in the mouth

Often Aunt Lily Bell ordered the application of various greases and oils:

Snake bites - snake oil
 Croup - poultice of onions fried in goat tallow
 Rheumatism - rub on either buzzard grease, frog oil, or alligator
 fat

When Aunt Sarah Baker wanted home remedies, she took them from the trees and plants of the gardens, the fields, and the woods. She described graphically to me how the knowledge of the curative properties of plant life first came to her. It was on a hot day when she had chopped cotton all the morning. At noon she lay flat on her back, stretched out on the front porch to rest a minute while her mother dished up the dinner things. As Sarah dozed off, the Lord came and sat on her chest and kept repeating, "There is healing in the leaves." And thereafter from time to time as need arose, He taught her what she knew of botanical remedies. The first lesson had taught her that seven kinds of leaves (any seven kinds) crushed and rubbed on will keep a bee sting from swelling.

Many of her simple remedies involved the use of leaves and vines. She made something of a science of matching the sign or signature (the shape or nature of the leaf or plant) with the nature of the ailment. For instance, a heart shaped leaf acted on heart trouble or snake root was to be chewed to prevent snakes from biting.

Numerous of her folk remedies from leaves and vines involved the use of teas such as the following:

- Bathing: Crushed peach leaves for typhoid fever
Crushed thyme for typhoid and other fevers
- Drinking: Ivy leaves for bad kidneys
Black jack vine for fevers
Corn shuck and rain water for blood disorders
Oak leaf or huckleberry leaf for diarrhea
Wild iris root (pneumonia plant) for pneumonia
Toad grass for colds

Various leaves are used for poultices or packs. Some of these are:

- Castor bean leaves for headache and fever
- Cold pack of crushed catnip leaves for headache
- Washed jimson leaves for boils
- Leaves of toothache tree (prickly ash) for toothache
- Mullein leaves crushed for sores and boils

Other home remedies take flowers, seeds and berries. These are a few of Aunt Sarah's prescriptions of that kind:

- Jimson flowers and sugar made into worm candy
- Okra blossoms and sugar for boils
- Clover blossoms in clear white lard as a salve for almost any sore
- Pumpkin seeds parched with salt like peanuts to cure bed wetting
- Flax seed in honey to ease whooping cough
- Chinaberry necklace for worms
- Alderberry juice for dropsy
- May apple fruit in whiskey to keep insect bites from swelling.

Most of the prescriptions which called for whiskey were to be taken internally either as a general tonic, such as cherry bark in whiskey, or as a specific cure for some definite complaint. Here are examples of these specific

4
remedies with a whiskey base:

Goldenrod root and whiskey for hay fever

Blackberry root and whiskey for stomach cramps

Wild plum bark cut from the sunrise side of the tree, boiled for hours in an iron pot and mixed with whiskey for asthma

Aunt Sarah offered a multitude of other folk remedies, but for one thing she said there just is nothing that will do any good: "If you get hurt falling out of a fig tree," she warned, "you'll just never get well. The good Lord knowed that and seldom never lets a fig tree get to be more than a bush, and even in the size of a tree it don't offer no chance for easy climbing. God and nature fends for mortal man in his ignorance of what might do him good or do him hurt."

IN MEMORIAM

George Pullen Jackson (1874-1953)

With the passing, on January 19, of Dr. George Pullen Jackson, Emeritus Professor of German, Vanderbilt University, the world of arts and letters has lost one of its great figures; and we who were near to him have lost a beloved friend whose warm-hearted graciousness never flagged, a master through whose gentle and cordial instruction we were led to drink again and again, unceasingly, from the fountain that—in the words of the old song—never runs dry.

He has crossed over Jordan. And if he could speak to us, he would say in song, "Weep not, my friends, my friends weep not for me, All is well." We have the consolation of religion, which has no more comforting voice than in the spiritual songs he knew so well and loved so much. We have also the more secular assurance that in his end was his beginning. As to his great work, it can be truly said of George Pullen Jackson (as it can rarely be said of aspiring genius) that he finished what he began. For his last book, illustrated by his own versatile hand—Another Sheaf of White Spirituals—came from the press just before he was stricken with the illness that later proved fatal. It rounds out and in a fine sense completes his work of restoring to us a great tradition of religious song, long cherished by some, but half-forgotten by others, and unknown to many. He lived to see the completion of this grand and memorable enterprise, which in one sense is his earthly monument and reward, but in a higher and nobler sense perpetuates his life, his voice, his wise and generous mind among generations to come and joins his presence with theirs forever. On all he touched, George Pullen Jackson cast a warm, a joyous light. It will never cease to shine, wherever music is heard. This is the heritage he leaves us. We cherish it and keep him close, in affection and memory.

--Donald Davidson

AN ANALYSIS OF TEXT-CONTROLLED TUNE VARIATIONS IN
"THE BOSTON BURGLAR"

by

George W. Boswell

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Since American folksong collecting is in its comparatively adult stage, students may now and then feel justified in taking time out, drawing a deep breath, and treating themselves to the pleasure of a general discussion or two about the fruits of their labors. My special interest is in showing (1) that with ballads in particular, the story—the poem—is the thing, and its tune is its indispensable but subordinate ornamentation; and (2) that in folk-songs as a class the tunes are extraordinarily if unconsciously well-tailored to best bring out the meaning of the lines. From the Tennessee archives I have chosen one variant of "The Boston Burglar" to analyze in this paper, with due humility but emboldened by Mr. Samuel P. Bayard's recommendation as head of the Folk Song Committee of the Comparative Literature II Section of the Modern Language Association, 1947, that we should encourage "more studies of individual folk songs as text-and-tune complexes."¹

Cox states that "The Boston Burglar" is a slightly Americanized version of the English "Botany Bay." References to it and other American incidences of are to be found, among other collections, in Cox, Scarborough, and Eddy,² with tunes in the latter two volumes. The present variant was obtained from Mrs. W. M. Jones of Nashville, Tennessee, who learned it thirty years ago from oral tradition in Franklin County. Though the text is close to the above-mentioned variants, the melody is quite different.

The Boston Burglar

1. Oh, I was born in Boston, a city you all know well;
Raised up by honest parents—the truth to you I'll tell.
2. Raised up by honest parents, raised up most tenderly,
Till I became a sporting man at the age of twenty-three.

1. Journal of American Folklore, LXI, No. 241 (July-September, 1948), 303.

2. John H. Cox, Folk-Songs of the South (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925); Dorothy Scarborough, A Song Catcher in Southern Mountains (Columbia University, 1937); Mary O. Eddy, Ballads and Songs from Ohio (New York: J. J. Augustin, 1939).

3. Then my character 'twas taken, and I was sent to jail.
My friends, they found it was in vain to get me out on bail.
4. The jury found me guilty; the clerk, he wrote it down;
The judge, he passed a sentence; I was bound for Charleston Town.
5. They put me on an east-bound train one cold December day,
And every station that I passed, I heard the people say,
6. "There goes the Boston burglar; in strong iron chains he's bound.
He's done some crime or other—he's bound for Charleston Town."
7. I have an aged father a-standing at the bar,
Also an aged mother a-tearing out her hair.
8. A-tearing out those old gray locks; the tears come rolling down.
"My son, my son, what have you done to be carried to Charleston Town?"
9. I have a girl in Boston, a girl I love so well,
And if I get my liberty alone with her I'll dwell.
10. If ever I get my liberty, bad company I'll shun;
Also rambling, gambling men and drinking of strong rum.
11. To all who have your liberty, pray keep it while you can.
Don't run around with boys at night and break the laws of man.
12. For if you do you surely will, you'll find yourself like me,
A-serving out those twenty-one years in the penitentiary.

The Boston Burglar

Oh, I was born in Bos- ton, a cit- y you all know well;

Raised up by hon- est par- ents--the truth to you I'll tell.

The musical notation consists of two staves in G major (one sharp) and 2/2 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the verse, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Variations: (a) stanzas 3, 5, 8, 11 and 12; (b) stanza 10; (c) stanza 9;
(d) stanzas 7 and 8.

The Franklin County "Boston Burglar" is in twelve iambic stanzas which may be arranged in two or in four lines each. If in four lines, the regular so-called ballad stanza form is obtained in five stanzas (5, 8, 10, 11, and 12); but a factor that suggests arrangement in two-line stanzas is the frequent omission of the fourth strong accent:

Oh, I 'wás born in Bós-ton, x |
 A cit-ý you all know well,
 Raised up by hon-est par-ents— x |
 The truth to you I'll tell.

Three other stanzas are, like the first, catalectic in both lines (4, 6, and 7), whereas three stanzas are defective in only the first line (2, 3, and 9). What effects these variations in stanza pattern have on the tune we shall see in a moment.

A number of stylistic characteristics aid in indicating the traditionality of this ballad:

1. Repetition ("Raised up by honest parents")
2. A certain amount of ambiguity (meaning of "my character 'twas taken"?)
3. Pleonasm ("friends they")
4. Popular phrasing of proper name ("Charleston Town")
5. Incremental series (jury, clerk, judge; father, mother, girl)
6. Inexact rhyme ("bar...hair")

The melody appears to be in an excellent folk tradition. Heptatonic, with keynote G, it should be written in the natural key (no sharps, no flats), thus making C do, the keynote so, and the mode Mixolydian. I use the signature of one sharp, following the practice of Cecil J. Sharp, for several reasons: the modern musician likes to have do the keynote whenever at all practicable; for the singer of the present mode-less day this tune is actually easier to sight-read with major (Ionic-tonic) tonality; its Mixolydian nature, established by the flatted seventh (F \sharp) which occurs only once, is not very compelling.

Even though the D, the fifth, occurs as often as G, there is no question that G is the keynote; the uncertainty lies in what to call it. Occurrence incidence of the tones is as follows:³

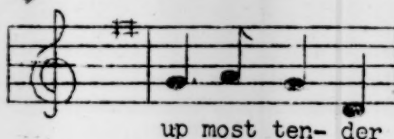
-
3. This system gives each beat-note one count. In addition, an anacrusis and the first note in each measure get an extra count, the semi-cadence gets two extra counts, and the final note in a song gets three extra counts.

			C or G		
7	F	6	FA	TE	
6	E	1	MI	LA	
5	D	$1\frac{3}{4}$	RE	SO	
4	C	$5\frac{1}{2}$	DO	FA	
3	B	$2\frac{1}{2}$	TI	MI	
2	A	$2\frac{1}{2}$	LA	RE	(also A#, $\frac{1}{2}$)
1	G	$1\frac{3}{2}$	SO	DO	

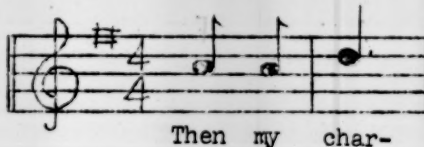
It is obvious that a strong pentatonic tradition underlies this heptatonic tune. In terms of the Gilchrist-Sharp analysis system it seems to be in the fourth (heptatonic—a + b) mode plagal. In this mode tones 3 and 6 are weak; but in our tune, whereas 6 is clearly the weakest, 3 is about as strong as 2. Structurally it is ABCA₁.

All who are acquainted with folk-singing know that a song is characterized by considerable variation in both words and melody. This may take the form of changes in diction or of the melody each time it is performed, or of musical variation between stanzas. Herein lies one of the principal distinctions between strophic art- and folk-songs: in the former, tune variation from stanza to stanza takes place only in order to accommodate an extra text syllable now and then; in the latter, variations take place for a number of other reasons as well.

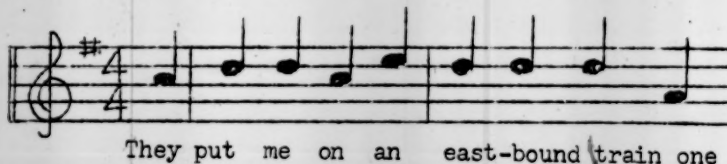
Let us glance first at typical examples of the kind of variations in "The Boston Burglar" that are shared by art song. Since stanza 2, measure 3, is sung thus:



instead of syncopated as in stanza 1, it is clear that the syncopation of stanza 1 was introduced only because of the desire to complete the word "city" before pausing. Similarly, an anapaestic foot ("at the age") at the beginning of stanza 2's last line demands a tune variation, this time two eighth notes instead of one quarter. Splitting the anacrusis is necessary at the beginning of stanza 3:



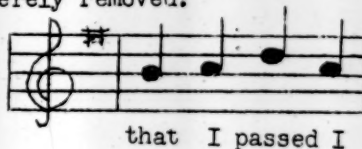
Now, what happens to the music for a stanza having its proper quota of four accented syllables in its first line? Stanza 5 begins like this:



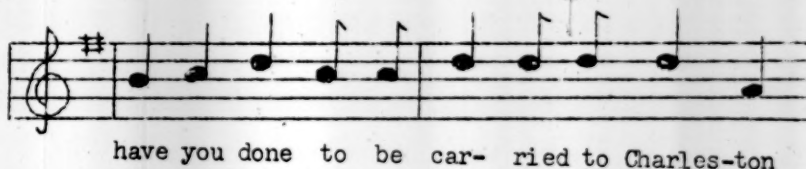
Insofar as exact accentual fit between tune and text is concerned, then, this line is seen to be of the natural meter (eight syllables) instead of the seven-syllabled line 1 of stanza 1. The half-note on the strong syllable "Bos-" embraced also a non-existent weak syllable, and the normally thesis "-ton" was elevated to a position of accent:

Oh, I 'was born in Bos- 'ton.

When the third line of a stanza is complete with eight syllables, the tie, first half of measure 6, is merely removed:



Tune change occasioned by two sequential anapaestic feet is handled in this manner:

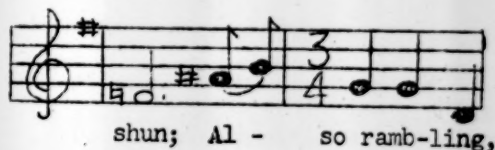


Finally, we are ready to examine tune changes by the folk that are not common to art song. Four in number, they are noted as letter-footnotes beneath "The Boston Burglar" and the stanzas with which each occurs are listed.

(a) The first measure has straight time in stanzas 3, 5, 8, 11, and 12. Apparently the unique split anacrusis (anapaestic foot) in stanza 3 and the four notes (syllables) instead of three in measure 2 of stanzas 5, 8, 11, and 12 account in some manner for the alteration in measure 1. The actual contents of the first measure do not seem to vary to a significant extent from stanza to stanza:

"I was born in," "up by honest," "character 'twas,"
"jury found me," "put me on an," "goes the Boston,"
etc.

(b) This variation, in stanza 10 only, is the most interesting. In effect a kind of figure-shift across the measure bar, it is caused by the unique necessity of beginning line 3 of stanza 10 with not one but two trochaic substitute feet (al-so ram-bling). In stanza 7 the single trochee "also" lent itself to iambicization. Incidentally, the temptation was great in recording this tune to note variation (b) thus:



(c) The figure on "liberty" in stanza 9 is likewise unique. Amounting to a lengthening of the time spent on "lib-," it is explained by observing that of all the four-accent line 3's, this is the only one that has a far weaker fourth accent than third:

And if ' I get ' my lib- ' er- ty. ' ? ' !

(d) Why the penultimate measure should have its two first notes on the same pitch in stanzas 7 and 8 only was difficult to perceive at first. The explanation, of course, turns out to be that they alone set the two syllables of single words ("tear-ing" and "car-ried") on those two notes; in other stanzas syllables of separate words occur on them.

In this ~~brief~~ text-tune discussion of the Franklin County "Boston Burglar," I believe I have demonstrated the following: (1) the text integrity is in the best oral tradition; (2) there is the essential repetition of a suitable, sympathetic tune for each stanza; but (3) the totally unconscious variation of this tune in accordance with line, foot, word, and even syllable changes from stanza to stanza. If such a study accomplishes nothing else, perhaps it is worthwhile in pointing-up what a fascinating project investigation of the poetry and music in folksong may be.

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BACK ISSUES OF T. F. S. BULLETIN WANTED

Libraries which want to complete their files of the T.F.S. Bulletin are able to secure most of the needed volumes complete from the Editor. His supply of certain numbers, however, is exhausted. Members who have those numbers and who are willing to sell them are requested to write the Editor, William J. Griffin, at George Peabody College for Teachers. He will be glad to put them in touch with libraries that wish to purchase such copies.

The numbers of the Bulletin particularly needed are:

Volume I, all numbers	Volume VIII, No. 4
Volume II, all numbers	Volume XIII, No. 4
Volume IV, all numbers	Volume XVIII, No. 1
Volume VI, No. 3	

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ERRATUM IN THE DECEMBER, 1953, BULLETIN

Attention is called to the fact that the address of the Elektra-Stratford Record Corporation, publisher of the excellent disc, "Jean Richie Sings," was erroneously reported in the December, 1953, Bulletin. The correct address is 189 West 10th Street, New York 14, N. Y.

DIALECT COLLECTORS NEED THE HELP OF FOLKLORISTS

by

Gordon R. Wood

University of Chattanooga

The dialect collector who ignores the work of folklorists does so at his own peril, for the folklorist is or should be his ever-present help in time of trouble. Of the many reasons for insisting upon this, none is so important as the knowledge that the folklorist is intimately a part of the group whose songs and sayings he has recorded. He is a part of the living community, not an observer of the dead community as is the historian or biographer. And being so closely concerned with what a group sings or says, he can point out the oldest traditions of that group, their origins, and the ways in which the group at other times departs from the traditions.

But to get to cases. How can members of the Tennessee Folklore Society aid another member, this writer, whose interest is in dialect collecting? Well, the immediate problem is to discover what counties and what persons in those counties give the most ancient folk information. The assumption is that they will give good dialect information as well. In west Tennessee, I believe we are in the "Southern" linguistic area. But the trouble is, no one has investigated the language traits of that area in Tennessee; plenty of studies have been made of the eastern part --the Smokies is best studied--but that part of the state has "Midland" speech characteristics. What is needed, then, is the name of someone in Lake County and someone else in Fayette County and wherever else the best folklore collecting occurs. Something of the person's speech traits would help the dialect investigator. Thus the remark that an informant says "hyeah" instead of "hyur" will place that informant properly so that the student of dialect can decide which of several informants he will see first. The dialect collector will then interview those persons and they can serve as informants for him as they have for the folklorist.

The second way that folklorists can help the dialect collector is to explain to him what is kept alive only in traditional sayings and what prevails in actual speech. Recently the expression "too lazy to say 'sooie' to pigs" appeared in the folklore Bulletin as something from middle Tennessee. Now, the folklorist can say with some certainty either that middle Tennesseans use "sooie" when they actually call the pigs or that they use some expressions such as "piggoop" or "vootie." Each of these is a regional term and the dialect geographer needs lots of help when he begins to draw his conclusions from printed matter. Not always, but often. Having just recently looked at Professor George Boswell's dissertation on folk song, I was pleased to learn from him that doth as recorded in that dissertation was pronounced once to rime with both.

That ancient pronunciation was apparently lost before our forebears sailed to the colonies or moved into Tennessee. We both agreed that what the first settlers brought with them was a u sound, something close to the modern pronunciation of does. But the dialect collector was especially delighted to have an example of an abandoned pronunciation which had been kept alive under very special circumstances.

The third way is for the folklorist to become something of a dialect collector himself. Of course, this will always be a bit left-handed since his chief interest is properly in folklore. But even so, in the course of his own work, he will hear words and ways of pronunciation which are clearly local. And the true dialect collector will appreciate everything which the folklorist sends his way. At the fall meeting of T.F.S. I heard, among other things, "tarmahawk," "Jerdans" for the eye-pronunciation "Jordans," "highboy," "play party" for square dance, "kivers" and "kiverlids," "lamp oil" for kerosene, "sut" instead of "soot," and "the printer's boy" as a corruption or folk etymology of "the prentice boy." All these went into my growing collection of regional expressions. And in this regard, it should be noted that Tennessee speech as such has not been collected with a third the zeal that Tennessee folklore has. The exhortation to become at least left-handed dialect collectors is well worth making.

The final way that folklore studies can aid linguistic ones is in settling the problems of the origin and movement of distinctive language traits. From the facts of Tennessee history we know that the group which first came through the mountain gaps and settled our state spoke a type of English now called "Midland," having its origins in colonial Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware. We also know that a second group, with the speech of tidewater Virginia, skirted the mountains, settled the cotton lands of the South and by the beginning of the Civil War had penetrated western Tennessee. That group spoke what is technically called "Southern." But in the cross currents and eddies of other settlements in the state--Quaker, Melungeon, late-arrived Britisher, Pennsylvania Dutch--the linguistic geographer is often confused. Whenever the folklorist can trace the movement of folk materials with definiteness, then the linguist will do well to make use of that information. One of the neat linguistic problems, for instance, is what happened to Scots pronunciation and vocabulary. The only bit of Scots speech I have found so far is "tarn," a word for "pool." It was obsolescent by 1920. Any evidence of Scots folklore, definitely located in Tennessee, will be of great value.

The writer has hinted that vast investigations need to be made. Indeed, they do. Three counties out of more than ninety have been carefully explored; the rest of the state is, linguistically speaking, almost unknown wilderness. Much of what is available in printed or written form can be explored at leisure. But that vast source of information which is preserved only in speech and which changes with each generation needs to be investigated at once. In a few winters the last of those persons who can be considered of the Civil War generation will have died. If we do not get at the speech of this generation at once, we will have lost forever the evidence of one of the important formative influences upon our ways of talking. The folklorist can serve as the best informed friend or best placed contact with this group of speakers. I will appreciate all the helps that folklorists can give in gathering this evidence. If it is only to send the name of one informant, fine. If it is to become dialect collectors, linguistic geographer, and the like, wonderful. I will be glad to pass any information I have on to you. To use the well worn Bible phrase, the workers are few; the fields are white to the harvest.

MILITARY AND CIVIL TITLES IN THE OLD SOUTHWESTERN YARNS

by

James H. Penrod

Kentucky Wesleyan College

Owensboro, Kentucky

One of the best sources of information about the people of the antebellum South is the work of the humorists commonly known today as the "Southwestern yarnspinners." Few, if any, of these semi-professional writers consciously wrote social history. Nevertheless, they presented intimate, graphic, and essentially accurate pictures of the varied social classes and specimens of humanity which, by and large, represented the population of the Old Southwest. The present study is limited to a consideration of the bearers of military and civil titles delineated by the Southwestern yarnspinners.

In the literary sketches of the Old Southwest, captains, majors, colonels, and squires abound. As in the real life of the period, the possessors of these proud titles were a heterogeneous lot, having almost nothing in common except their pretensions to distinction.¹ The rage, particularly for military rank, was not confined to any social or economic class. As Dick has pointed out, "Europeans were more than astonished to find a colonel plowing or swinging a hammer in the village blacksmith shop."²

In a Longstreet yarn the author said of Squire Sims, a former justice of the peace in a rural district of Georgia: "It is the custom in this state, when a man has once acquired a title, civil or military, to force it upon him as long as he lives."³ A strikingly similar statement was made by Baldwin: "I believe that every man that ever came from Georgia is a major—repaying the honor of the commission or title by undeviating fidelity to the democratic ticket."⁴ Actually the men of rank seem to have been rather widely dispersed in the Old Southwest rather than having been confined to Georgia alone.

Since the less reputable or bogus members of the clan made more fitting subjects for amusing tales, it was natural that the yarnspinners displayed a bias in writing about the unsavoury gentlemen of rank more often than their more respectable compeers. They appeared as pseudo-sportsmen at race tracks,

1. For an interesting and illuminating discussion of the titled gentlemen of the frontier in history and anecdote, see Thomas D. Clark, The Rampaging Frontier (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Publishing Company, 1939), pp. 183-204.

2. Everett Dick, The Dixie Frontier (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), p. 333.

3. Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, "The Shooting Match," Georgia Scenes (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1840), p. 278.

4. Joseph G. Baldwin, The Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi (New York: D. Appleton, 1853), pp. 66-67.

as politicians of a low order, as tavern proprietors, as crooked gamblers, as gentlemen of leisure and bad credit. Generally the origin of their titles was unexplained, the suspicion being that most were spurious or easily gained.

One of the most elaborately sketched gentlemen of rank was Joseph G. Baldwin's General Gymm, a prize example of the deadbeat pretender to wealth and position. In his typically ironic vein, Baldwin described the status of his Alabama man of leisure in this fashion: "He followed the profession of a gentleman: he had never, down to that period, degraded his talents or prostituted his accomplishments to an ignobler calling...." The general's proclivities as a social parasite were delicately but unmistakably sketched by his creator:

The idea of moral obligations as connected with, or involved in, the payment of a debt he was disposed to regard as a superstition rapidly becoming obsolete, and having its origins in barbarous times....The General concentrated his energies upon receiving. His capacity in that respect was great: he was eminently receptive; he never tired of taking....He was not restive under a sense of obligation; he cared not how long he remained under obligations to a friend....⁵

This faker liked being dunned for money or sued: "It showed that the creditors still had hopes." He maintained at all times a deep interest in stocks, investments, and insurance. "Not a failure happened on Wall Street but he seemed to feel it as if he had been on all the bankrupt's paper; not a ship went down to sea but he was thrown into a tremor as if he had lost an argosy."

The self-importance of the General was further attested by his interest in politics, especially matters of currency. He was also something of a busybody and gossip who knew everybody's family history, begged money for the poor, and visited the sick. On one occasion he tried to rescue a friend in shallow water, almost drowned both of them in so doing, and later attempted to collect damages.⁶ Altogether, it was not surprising that even the aggressive Colonel Burrows failed in a determined effort to collect an old debt from the General, who glibly gave him a fantastic alibi without batting an eye.

The bogus titled gentleman was put through even more of the conventional paces of Southwestern humor by Harden E. Taliaferro, whose Captain Robert Exquisite of Alabama was a verbose boaster, a coward pretending to courage, a pauper pretending to wealth, a parasite pretending to generosity, and a fool pretending to wisdom. In the grandiloquence of his speech and the essential fraudulence of his character he resembled the most notable literary example of his breed, Colonel Beriah Sellers, created by Mark Twain a decade or so later.

5. Joseph G. Baldwin, "General Gymm and Colonel Burrows," Southern Literary Messenger, XX (April, 1854), pp. 228, 229.

6. Ibid., pp. 229-231.

The origin of Captain Exquisite's title was explained. Upon the outbreak of the Mexican War, his denunciations of the enemy were loud and long. Both his patriotic fervor and personal ambitions were expressed in the following outburst:

"If the good, noble, just and patriotic citizens of this honorable and highly esteemed town and country, will just presume to make me up a company of one hundred gallant men, and appoint me Captain, I'll go and meet them on the field of conflict, defeat them quickly, instantaneously, and ingloriously, and presume to march and counter-march throughout the length and breadth of their widespread territory, and will cap the climax of American glory by planting our victorious Eagle on the ancient and venerable halls of the proud Montezumas...."

Suspected of being a coward at heart, Robert was encouraged by his associates to organize a company. On the day appointed he appeared in all the splendor he could assemble. Apparently the whole village was aware of the joke being perpetrated. So great was the number of volunteers that Captain Exquisite asked that a written list be drawn up. A perusal of this roll, made up entirely of such fictitious names as "Edward Lightningsnatcher" and "Ezekiel Pantherkiller," convinced the would-be hero that he had been "badly sold."

Captain Exquisite was a poor farmer, but constructed elaborate excuses for not having chosen law, medicine, statesmanship, or theology as his profession. A wretched hunter, he constructed fanciful stories of his prowess differing from those of his more uncouth prototypes in that, conversely to their tendency to understate super-human feats, he cloaked the story of such humdrum feats as killing squirrels in the most florid language. Like virtually all members of his breed, he was also a close follower of politics. He was frequently the object of mirth because of upsets to his dignity, as, for example, when he "took a spill" at a wedding when he failed to note the absence of a chair under him. Like General Gynn, he was a parasite who made a pretense of magnanimity. He was almost forced to a showdown on one occasion, when some acquaintances unexpectedly accepted his invitation to dinner, an emergency which required making the fullest use of his elusive talents.

Of the frequency of duels participated in by the title-bearing members of frontier society, Clark has commented: "Above all things, a titled gentleman had his honor entrusted to his care, and he had to keep it from being trampled upon even in the slightest degree...."⁸

The wary Captain Exquisite had the vanity common to his ilk, but adroitly parried a challenge from the offended Squire Shaver by writing an extensive letter "unrivaled in duelistic correspondence," setting forth his reasons for declining the offer. He climaxed these arguments by declaring, "But should we meet...and I should be so fortunate as to kill you, sir, the world would only be rid of one more barbarian, that's all."⁹

7. David K. Jackson (ed.), Carolina Humor: Sketches by Harden E. Talliaferro (Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1938), pp. 41-42.

8. Clark, op. cit., pp. 189-190.

9. Jackson, op. cit., p. 49.

The yarnspinners capitalized on the close correspondence between military and political rank in the Southwest, illustrated by Generals Jackson, William Henry Harrison, and Zachary Taylor, to create several "coonskin politicians" bearing titles. Perhaps the closest model for their characters of this type was the real-life Colonel David Crockett, who served three terms in Congress as a Representative from Tennessee, during which period he became virtually the archetype of the coonskin politician. His career is too familiar to be treated here. It would appear that counterparts of Crockett existed within ranks of both major parties at the time—men of similar background who bore similar titles.

For example, Joseph B. Cobb wrote a sketch of the election contest of 1848 between Zachary Taylor (Whig) and Lewis Cass (Democrat), describing a campaign barbecue in Mississippi. The spokesman for the Democrats was Captain Cockroach; for the Whigs, Major Gunsmasher. In their speeches, "calm, dispassionate argument, sound reason, and a candid exposition of the principles which separated the two parties were, it was distinctly understood, to be totally expurgated and eschewed."¹⁰

A politician bearing a title appeared briefly in Major Jones's Courtship in the person of Squire Pettybone, who attempted to state his platform before the village militia company: "I ain't no bank man—I'm posed to all banks—but I is a frend to the pore man, and is always reddy to stand up for his constitutional rites."¹¹ Like most, if not all, of the "coonskin" colonels and squires in the sketches of the yarnspinners, he was an essentially ridiculous, fraudulent character of the same stamp as Captain Suggs, the aspiring political candidate, who declared emotionally: "Simon Suggs never forgits his friends—never! His motter is allers, Fust his country, and then his friends!"¹²

The far-flung distribution of the gentlemen of rank may be briefly illustrated. An unnamed major who was a jovial landlord in a small village in Southern Missouri elicited this tribute from an admiring feminine customer: "Sich another man as that major...ain't nowhere and sich a mixtur' as he does make is temptin' to temp'rance lect'urers."¹³ Nothing else about this worthy proprietor was revealed. Another "officer" whose title and general background were equally clouded was the defaulting "colonel," a crooked gambler, who barely escaped from an irate sheriff's posse in Little Rock, Arkansas, through the cooperation of a friendly steamboat captain.¹⁴ At a Georgia race track,

10. Joseph B. Cobb, "A Campaign Barbecue in the Old Southwest," Mississippi Scenes (Philadelphia: A. Hart, late Carey and Hart, 1851), p. 141.

11. William T. Thompson, Major Jones' Courtship (Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson & Brothers, 1848), p. 28.

12. Johnson J. Hooper, Simon Suggs' Adventures (Americus, Georgia: Americus Book Company, 1928), p. 77.

13. John S. Robb, "Not a Drop More, Major, Unless It's Sweetened," Streaks of Squatter Life (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1846), pp. 51-58.

14. Anon., "A Running Fight Upon the Rakensack," Polly Peablossom's Wedding, and Other Tales, ed. T. A. Burke (Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson and Brothers, 1851), pp. 191-195.

Major Close stated that he lacked funds to pay for the vest he was wearing, then treated a large company to a dollar bowl of punch and wagered fifty dollars on one race.¹⁵ Major Billy Subsequent, a transplanted First Family Virginian, was distinguished chiefly by his abnormal obesity, his ridiculous pride in his ancestry, and his tendency to starve his horses and mules.¹⁶ A colossal bluffer in a Kentucky village, Colonel Dick Jones, was accounted the "great man" of the community. Apparently his claim to his military title was unsullied, since he commanded a regiment, but there his distinction ended. He was "professionally more specious than deep," owing his advancement more to partiality than merit. He was likewise a swaggering braggart, ostentatious in his dress and attentions to the ladies, and a pretender to more fighting ability than he possessed.¹⁷

The popularity of the militia drills accounted largely for the plentiful supply of military titles in the Old Southwest. The passing of the Indian menace had removed the most valid reason for the organization and regular meetings of these companies, but they endured largely because their drills were social events in the community. It is probable they were not generally ludicrous or violent, but in the works of the yarnspinners the musters usually became a mere excuse for strutting, drinking, and fighting. Naturally, the officers who commanded these groups were the butt of considerable ridicule.

Even Major Jones, the rather shy, good-as-gold small Georgia planter, became rather pompous at the head of his battalion in a militia drill. Prior to his inspection of the ranks, he commanded, "In the name of the State of Georgia, I cummand the drum to drum for me. I's Majer of this betallion and I's cummander of the musick too!" In dressing for the occasion he found his britches and boots did not fit, and his coat tails would not hang right. After mounting his horse with great difficulty, Major Jones managed to reach the scene of the muster, but was rudely thrown from his charger when his men gave him a salute with rifles, which they thought suitable to the occasion. In the drill that followed many of the conventions of military humor were employed. The Major complained, "A good menny of 'em begun to forgit which was ther right hand and which was ther left...." His men successively became twisted in a snarl, scattered all over the field, and looked blank when he used such military commands as "Close up!" When the crude soldiers encountered two politicians and launched into a rough-and-tumble general fight, Jones gave up in disgust, remarking, "Lots of 'em had ther eyes bunged up so they couldn't 'eyes right!' to save 'em...."¹⁸ In the subsequent chapters and volumes, Major Jones retained his title but devoted his attention to non-military affairs.

Probably the most famous of all the stories of the village militia musters featured the comic figure of Captain Clodpole. The humor in this sketch arose largely from Clodpole's complete lack of control over his men. In the beginning he addressed them politely, even apologetically in such phrases as these:

15. Longstreet, "The Turf," *op. cit.*, p. 208.

16. Henry Clay Lewis, "The Man of Aristocratic Diseases," *Odd Leaves from the Life of a Louisiana Swamp Doctor* (Philadelphia: A. Hart, 1843) pp. 157-164.

17. C. F. M. Noland (?), "Jones's Fight," *The Big Bear of Arkansas, and Other Tales*, ed. W. T. Porter (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1845) pp. 32-41.

18. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-30.

I hope you will have a little patience, gentlemen, if you please; and if I should be agoing wrong, I will be much obliged to any of you, gentlemen, to put me right again; for I mean all for the best, and I hope you will excuse me, if you please. And one thing, gentlemen, I caution you against in particular, and that is this: not to make any mistakes, if you can possibly help it....¹⁹

In the ludicrous drill that followed, the soldiers ignored military rule in bending their line so that all could march in the shade. They also threatened to abandon the whole day's activity and repair to a drinking place, swearing that "they would never vote for another captain who wished to be so unreasonably strict." Captain Clodpole agreed to send for some grog, then resumed his lame attempts at practicing military maneuvers, and in doing so revealed his own abysmal ignorance of things military.

The squires were not, generally speaking, members of the landed gentry, as were such figures in English novels as Fielding's Squire Weston, but representatives of the law. Rarely did they assume importance in the printed yarns, and even when they did, they were customarily shown in their off-duty pursuits. Thus Longstreet's Squire Sims, a former justice of the peace, was pictured as a patron of the rustic shooting-match.²⁰ Squire A. of Alabama, whose title was unexplained, was distinguished chiefly as a gourmand with a particular fondness for fritters.²¹ The hypocritical Squire Hanley of the Smoky Mountains gave, according to Sut Lovingood, "the hole of Sunday tu the Lord, an' shaved notes two days onder the skin ove weekly days, an' allers made the feller what got shaved, wait and git prayed fur...."²² His chief function in Sut's story was to serve as victim of one of his favorite pranks—that is, treating a pompous dignitary to an involuntary ride on a goaded horse.

Previous to the initial appearance of Sut Lovingood in print, Harris had created another squire who seemed to have encompassed all the activities, talents, and tastes of the residents of the Nobs of Knoxville in himself; according to the raconteur of his story, one Dick Harlan:

I'll try and tell you who Jo Spraggins is. He's a squire, a school comishoner, over-looker of a mile of Nob road that leads towards Roddy's still-house—a fiddler, a judge of a hoss, and a hoss himself! He can belt six shillins worth of corn-juice at still-house rates and travel—can out-shute and out-lie any feller from the Smoky Mounting to Noxville....can make more spinin-wheels, kiss more spinners, thrash more wheat an more men than eny one-eyed man I know on. He hates a circuit rider,

19. Longstreet, "The Militia Drill," *op. cit.*, p. 198. The authorship of "The Militia Drill," included in Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes*, is now generally attributed to Oliver H. Prince (1787-1837), a friend of Longstreet. See John Donald Wade, *Augustus Baldwin Longstreet* (New York: Macmillan, 1924), p. 178.

20. Longstreet, "The Shooting Match," *op. cit.*, pp. 278-279.

21. Baldwin, *The Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi*, pp. 142-146.

22. George W. Harris, *Sut Lovingood's Yarns* (New York: Dick and Fitzgerald, 1867), p. 287.

a nigger, an a shot gun—loves a woman, old sledge, an sin in eny shape.²³

The free-living Spraggins faded into the background after this auspicious introduction, as did most of the squires. As a group they were decidedly less notable than the bearers of military titles, although they might in many cases have come by their titles more honestly.

It should be evident from the examples cited that the yarnspinners generally satirized or burlesqued the gentlemen of rank, giving a radically different picture of them from that of Southern novelists of the periods before and after the Civil War. Possibly the most notable exception to this general tendency was Baldwin's Major Wormly, a Virginian in Alabama, whom the author described as "the noblest of the noble, the best of the good." Although he was an old-fashioned Virginia gentleman, the picture of Major Wormly was compounded from Sterne's Uncle Toby and Dickens' Mr. Pickwick and Micawber—as evidenced in the following passage.

He was the soul of kindness, disinterestedness and hospitality. Love to every thing that had life in it, burned like a flame in his large and benignant soul; it flowed over in his countenance, and glowed through every feature, and moved every muscle in the frame it animated. The Major lived freely, was rather corpulent, and had not a lean thing on his plantations; the negroes, the dogs; the horses; the cattle; the very chickens, wore an air of corpulent complacency, and bustled about with a good-humored rotundity. There was more laughing, singing, and whistling at "Hollywood" than would have set up a dozen Irish fairs.²⁴

The idealized picture of rustic family life was complemented by the introduction of the Major's four daughters, described as "fine, hearty, whole-souled, wholesome, cheerful lasses, with constitutions to last, and a flour of spirits like mountain springs...." In adversity Wormly displayed neither the overweening pride nor shiftlessness of a General Gymm.²⁵ He merely converted his house into a tavern, paid off his debts, and lived as happily as ever with his admirable wife and daughters. Although the portrait of this jolly, honorable gentleman of rank was sketched with the rosy colors commonly used on both the old Southern "colonel" and the merry English country gentlemen, Major Wormly was not too far removed from reality—probably no more so than many of his fellow title-bearers who did more to dishonor their rank than otherwise.

23. George W. Harris, "Dick Harlan's Tennessee Frolic," A Quarter Race in Kentucky, and Other Sketches, ed. W. T. Porter (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1846), pp. 82-83. This sketch, signed originally by "Sugartail" of Tennessee, has been definitely proved by Franklin J. Meine and Donald Day to be a Harris yarn.

24. Baldwin, The Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi, p. 100.

25. The same statement might also apply to Major Smith, an ex-Virginian who had adapted himself to the life of a small Louisiana planter, retaining little regard for wealth or pedigree (Lewis, "Love in a Garden," op. cit., pp. 177-178).

N E W S A N D R E V I E W S

READERS OF THE TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY Bulletin are promised that they may expect in a later issue a full-length article on the life and work of Dr. George Pullen Jackson.

EACH YEAR THE SOUTHEASTERN FOLKLORE SOCIETY, whose organ is the Southern Folklore Quarterly, holds a meeting as one section of the South Atlantic Modern Language Association. This year, November 27-29, the association gathered on the modernistic, sun-baked campus of the University of Miami. George W. Boswell reported on "Some Rare 'Finds' in Recent Tennessee Folksong Collecting"; Francis W. Bradley spoke on "Folklore in Folk Speech"; Marie Campbell read a paper on "Folk Remedies from South Georgia"; and Ralph Steele Boggs exploded "Some Persistent Misconceptions of Folklore." Précis of all these papers are to be printed in the SAMLA Bulletin.

Folklore also pervaded other sessions of learned discussions. Jesse Stuart addressed the entire gathering on the subject of his career; on the program of the regional American Dialect Society there were talks on "Collecting Occupational Vernacular" and "The Speech of Carroll County, Georgia," and Gordon R. Wood of the University of Chattanooga, among others, gave informal reports on collecting dialect.

At the business meeting of the Folklore Section, George W. Boswell was elected Secretary of the SFS.

GRACE CRESSWELL, well-known ballad signer and member of the T.F.S. gave a program of traditional songs at Peabody College on January 14. The following day, she appeared in a similar concert at Nashville's Parthenon. Miss Cresswell, who last summer broadcast a weekly program of folksongs from WSM, Nashville, is continuing her career on the radio in Houston, Texas.

IRENE BEWLEY, a pillar of our Society, was the subject of a two-page spread in the Nashville Tennessean Sunday Magazine for January 18. The article, written by Bill Woolsey, was entitled "Memory Miner." It celebrated Miss Bewley's genius in catching folk character, speech, and experience in popular dramatic monologues.

PROMENADE: A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE is now received as one of the Bulletin's exchanges. The little magazine, published by the American Square Dance Group, is in its eighth volume. Volume VIII, Issue 7, contains a brief collection of "Kentucky Talk," a bibliography relating to folklore and a list of folk music discs, a description of the square dance called "The Saratoga," and a transcript of "The Poor Pilgrim of Sorrow," as sung by Aunt Liddy Walker of Rudd Holler, Tennessee. The address of Promenade is 550 Riverside Drive, New York, N. Y.

PAUL FLOWERS, in his "Greenhouse" (Memphis Commercial Appeal, January 5, 1953), commented at some length on Clifton L. Hall's essay on "Folklore in Education," which was published in the Bulletin in September. He concluded by suggesting that the T.F.S. might make a collection and study of "the persistence of old jokes in school publications."

Members of the T.F.S. will welcome Mr. Flowers' interest. They may note that if he were a member of the Society he would not have referred to the September Bulletin as "the latest issue."

COLLEGE ENGLISH in its January, 1953, issue (pp. 243-244) carried a paragraph of summary and discussion of Charles F. Bryan's article on "The Hammered Dulcimer" that appeared in the June, 1953, Bulletin.

READERS OF THE T.F.S. BULLETIN will be interested in noting that Ralph Morrissey regularly calls attention to Bulletin articles in his column, "Under the Green Lamp" in the Nashville Sunday Tennessean.

JESSE STUART calls our attention to Opal Thornburg's "The Stillwater Tragedy: A Quaker Ballad" in Midwest Folklore (April, 1951, pp. 55-62). Mr. Stuart comments, "I have read this ballad and the explanation with much enjoyment....Honest, this ballad has something unusual...."

TEQUESTA: The Journal of the Historical Association of Southern Florida has appeared in its twelfth annual number. Readers of the T.F.S. Bulletin may be particularly interested in the articles by Jeanne Bellamy on "Newspapers of America's Last Frontier" and by Mrs. Henry J. Burkhardt on "Starch Making: A Pioneer Florida Industry." Tequesta is published as a bulletin of the University of Miami at Coral Gables.

THE RECORD LOFT, 189 West 10th Street, New York 14, N. Y., issues a fascinating and useful catalog of "Folk and Ethnic Music" that is available upon request. It lists 144 items that can be had at discounts ranging up to 30 per cent. The Record Loft also offers to assist in securing out-of-print folk music records and to make available private pressings of folk material. It claims to be "the only exclusively Folk music shop in the nation."

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTH CONFERENCE of the International Folk Music Council are published in that organization's Journal (Volume V, 1953). The report includes a transcript of the opening address of Council President, Ralph Vaughan Williams and transcripts or summaries of papers presented by persons concerned with aspects of folk music in a half dozen particular different countries as well as on the world scene. Special attention may be called to Charles Seeger's discussion of "Folk Music in the Schools of a Highly Industrialized Society" and Bertrand Bronson's distinctions between "Good and Bad in British-American Folk Song."

Beginning with a recognition that substantial changes in social organization are inevitably reflected in the cultivation and transmission of folk music traditions, Mr. Seeger points out that the first effects of industrialization is often the destruction of the traditional folk music repertoire. He insists, however, that the masses lose neither their need for continuous musical creativity nor their capacity for oral transmission. He believes that so long as folklorists alone are concerned with the revival of folk music traditions, their failure is certain, because they look "primarily to the past of the song"; but much good may be accomplished by an alliance of the folklorist with the educator, who looks "toward the future of the singer." Mr. Seeger identifies some of the promising possibilities, while he also warns against unpromising strategies.

His final charge is to guard against saying "the folk is dead" and hence attempting to make museum pieces of folksongs. Rather, we should say "the folk is changing—and its songs with it" and then do what we can to help make the change a healthy, wholesome one. Mr. Seeger has faith that the folk can be assisted in selecting "the makings of a new, more universal idiom for the more stabilised society that we hope is coming into being, from the best materials available, whether old or new."

Professor Bronson is concerned not only about the "abuse of folk song" on the radio and in other performances; he is also troubled by the rather general tendency of folklorists to reverence rubbish simply because it appears to proceed from the folk, and to exhibit little ability in distinguishing the genuine from the spurious in rendition of folksongs. As one essential mark of the genuine, he identifies "the absence of overt signs of awareness of a present audience subject to personal appeal."

The Journal's review section gives a half-page to Dr. Jackson's Another Sheaf of White Spirituals. Frank Howes concludes that on the whole, Dr. Jackson "succeeds in his survey ... in establishing his main thesis that the old ... habit of making 'sacred parodies' asserted itself on a vast scale in a huge tract of America ..., and that many of the tunes so adopted and adapted to a new purpose retain sufficient signs of their ancestry to be assigned to their archetypal families."

The first three numbers of Volume XVIII of the T.F.S. Bulletin are also noticed. Singled out for special comment are Charles F. Bryan's series on American folk instruments, Ruth W. O'Dell's article on Tennessee play parties, and George W. Boswell's radio script, "The Epic of Folk Song."

"KUANYAMA AMBO FOLKLORE" from the African interior is reported in detail by E. M. Loeb in Anthropological Records 13:4 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951). The whole account, with its collection of stories, poetry, proverbs, and riddles is fascinating. Of particular interest is the treatment of proverbs, which provides both a literal translation of the Bantu sayings and a comparison with apothegms well known in our own culture.

CHAPTER EIGHT OF CAROL SANDEBURG'S recently published autobiography, Always the Young Strangers (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company) is replete with folklore, folk customs, and folksay remembered by the author from his childhood in Galesburg, Illinois. Here is a sample:

The saying was, "If you see a white horse spit quick over a little finger and if none of the spit falls on your finger you will meet a red-headed girl." There were kids who claimed it worked. I spit clean and dry more than once and the red-headed girl didn't show up. Another saying was, "If you see a red-headed girl look for a white horse." We tried that and the white horse didn't show up, one kid busting out, "Oh, the hell with white horses!"

The chapter ends, "These sayings and stories on the streets and in the schoolyard stick in the memory like cockleburrs on a pants leg."

Cecil J. Sharp, Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians (edited by Maud Karpeles), New York: Oxford University Press, 1952. 2 vols. \$13.50.

This second and enlarged edition of folk songs and ballads collected by Cecil Sharp and Olive Dame Campbell from the Southern Appalachian Mountains is most welcome to students and lovers of folk music everywhere.

The first edition, published in 1932, comprised 122 songs (323 variants) collected by Sharp together with 32 songs (42 variants) by Campbell. The present enlargement, edited by Maud Karpeles, includes 986 tunes contributed by Sharp and 39 by Campbell, and is one of the most inclusive and comprehensive studies of Southern folk music of English background yet made.

Sharp became interested in the American collection after having done a comprehensive collection and study of the English ballad and folk song on the continent. Over a period of forty-six months the search by Sharp and Campbell was carried into North Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, and West Virginia. The richest finds were made in the Divide separating North Carolina and Tennessee; the best ballad texts came from Kentucky, and the finest tunes from Virginia.

This is an effort at presenting these tunes "in accordance with the system of modal classification" in the position of weak notes in hexatonic and heptatonic tunes, and in the position of the tonic. "These tunes are always true," someone has said, "because they are beautiful." Sharp once said (Introduction to First Edition) that a young musician mastering this volume would find that the resources at his command were more suited to his needs "than a conservatoire or a college of music."

In the present two-volume edition the ballads (72 in number) are dealt with in Volume I, with an ample supplement of descriptive and explanatory notes and with a bibliography. Volume II deals with songs, hymns, nursery songs, jigs, and play-party games, and is accompanied also with notes on the songs and with bibliography.

As Sharp observed that these songs were more English than American, one might currently observe with Cleanth Brooks that they are now more English than in England. While Child gave us the criterion of originality, Sharpe gives us that of evolution and of indigenesness. Sharp has done for the folk song generally what Dr. George Pullen Jackson has done more specifically in his studies of the Southern White Spirituals of the Highland Rim.

In this collection each song is identified as to tunes, variations, contributor, source, and date of recording. The modal classification is given as indicated. The influence of "modern culture" shown in transitions and affectations are considered. It is noted that play-party tunes and the jigs, as well as the hymns and ballads often exhibit transitional overlappings.

Here is an aspect of culture well worth preserving, as Sharp points out in his early Preface: "If education is to be cultural and not merely utilitarian, if the aim is to produce men and women capable, not only of earning a living, but of holding a dignified and worthy position upon an equality with the most cultured of their generation, it will be at least necessary to pay

as much attention to the training and development of the emotional, spiritual, and imaginative faculties as to those of the intellect."

--E. G. Rogers

John Vincent, The Diatonic Modes in Modern Music, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951. \$12.00.

This is one of the most thorough treatments of a new theory of modal scales in existence. Although no attempt at a critical review for musicologists is herein attempted, it may be said that the volume itself will be of vital interest to a variety of people--composers, performers, historians, teachers, students. It is a reexamination of Glareanus' Dodecachordon of 1547 "to include those diatonic scales which are a modern counterpart of the ecclesiastical modes." The more serious student of musical theory will find the results of this technical research to be of great value.

Abundant illustrations are given not only to reconcile tonal theory with practice but to show how many of the medieval concepts have been reinterpreted or modified by these basic scales in diatonic modes. Part II, which is an historical treatment, gives some background of the early systems and supports these with the genesis of the harmonic modes.

Music from the great masters both medieval and modern is frequently used for purposes of theoretical demonstration--Russian, French, German, Italian; Beethoven, Brahms, Debussy, Chopin, Gershwin, and many others. Each theory and each illustrated composition is fully discussed.

John Vincent, the author, who attended George Peabody College, the New England Conservatory, and Harvard University, is Professor of Music at the University of California. He is author of textbooks and is a composer of orchestral, choral, and chamber music.

--E. G. Rogers

Mary Lorraine Smith, Historic Churches of the South, Atlanta: Foot and Davies, Inc., 1952. \$3.50.

This is an appealing little volume in attractive format, which consists of 32 pictures of representative churches of the South with historical comments. It is a compilation in book form of a series of articles that previously appeared in Holland's Magazine. "The churches are selected," says the compiler "because they are denominationally and geographically representative, as well as significant."

The book will strike the interest of the choicy reader, from the most nostalgic desiring relaxation to the person simply anticipating a journey into some portion of the traditional South. These churches possess interest because of beauty, uniqueness of structure, historical tradition, important communicants, pioneering setting, or the object of their establishment.

McKendree Church and Vine Street Christian Church in Nashville come in for mention--the former as the forerunner of the organization of Vanderbilt University and as the scene of many important events such as governors'

inaugurals, the latter as the scene of many religious debates. The Jonesboro Presbyterian Church established by Samuel Doak represents building in a revived Gothic style. Others of these churches are interesting because of a local or general legend--the Jamestown Church where freedom was born; Old Rock Baptist Church, Texas, where Sam Houston's tradition is perpetuated; Cave Ridge Meeting House, Kentucky, scene of the Great American Revival. The Long Run Baptist Church in Kentucky is the one attended by the grandparents of both Lincoln and Truman; and the beautiful and historic St. Michael's of Charleston, is known principally for its legendary chimes.

This is a book for the reader of many moods. You may wish to project your arguments for beautiful churches which have been omitted, but you are certain to enjoy the tradition and legend of those included here.

--E. G. Rogers

Ray Wood, Fun in American Folk Rhymes (illustrated by Ed Hargis), Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1952. \$2.50. (Review reprinted from the Nashville Banner.)

Remember when you used to count out to see who'd be "it"? Remember the dozens of chants you knew for skipping rope, and the everlasting riddles you'd pester your folks with?

Ray Wood has spent years collecting riddles and rimes and versified chatter from old country kitchens, barnyards, ranch corrals, lumber camps, picnic grounds and city sidewalks. Your head will start spinning when you read "The Monkey's Wedding" [and the Ed Hargis drawings are just right], "The Sow Took the Measles," "My Mule Jenny," and "Brian O'Lin." Before you know it you'll be saying, "Hey, remember this one?" And your children will take the whole thing in by osmosis. You'll hear them chanting the stuff back in no time. There's something solid and wholesome about this good old American nonsense.

--Martha B. King

May Justis, Children of the Great Smoky Mountains (illustrations by Robert Henneberger), New York: Dutton. \$2.50. (Review reprinted from the Nashville Banner.)

May Justis is a Tennessee author known for her stories and folk tales of the mountain people among whom she lives. Her Children of the Great Smoky Mountains contains fifteen stories, illustrated with sharp black and white drawings that suggest both individual personality and spirited action.

The colloquial language of the mountain people is faithfully transcribed, as are their traditions, activities and folklore. Many of the simply told stories are built around folksongs from the author's own collection, for which both words and scores are given.

Nine to twelve-year-old readers will enjoy the stories if an adult can translate the colloquialisms for them. Adults interested in folk language and music will find this book delightful.

--Dorothea Griffin

Paul Radin, Elinore Marvel, and James Johnson Sweeney, compilers and editors, African Folktales and Sculpture, New York: Pantheon, 1952. (Bollingen Series, No. XXXII). 355 pp. \$8.50.

This is a beautiful outsize book. It is a storehouse of information about and illustrations of African Negro folk culture. It contains 83 tales selected from various sources and arranged under such rubrics as "The Universe and Its Beginnings," "The Animal and His World," and "The Realm of Man." No attempt is made to represent fully or consistently the mythic systems of particular tribes, but the explanatory matter and the careful bibliographic notes furnish the reader direction and advice in following up other approaches to materials here dealt with.

The second part of the book consists of a general discussion of African Negro sculpture and 165 excellent photographic plates. A great many of the pictures represent masks, though there is also a wide range of other subjects. Few of the objects photographed are to be seen in this country.

It is remarkable that so fine a book is listed at so (relatively speaking) low a price.

--W. J. Griffin

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